

ORM CORNER



Fleet Training in Full Swing

By Lt. Tom Binner,
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"This is just common sense; we already do it."

Comments like this greet our ORM team everywhere we go, which, thus far, has included San Diego, Mayport and Pascagoula. My response is always the same: "If this is common sense, and you're already doing it, why have we killed a thousand Sailors and Marines and spent \$4 billion because of mishaps during the past five years?"

In some cases, people hurt themselves but live to tell about it. One such person is a GSM3 who was manning the oil lab aboard a destroyer during a general-quarters drill. He smelled a strange odor and called a shipmate to investigate. The shipmate heard a hissing sound coming from a can of spray paint someone mistakenly had set on top of a ventilation

preheater. Both Sailors realized the risk they were facing and tried to get out of the space before the can exploded. The GSM3, however, was a little too slow, and a flying piece of the can hit his right leg, injuring it.

Operational risk management should be part of every task. If the GSM3 and his shipmate had inspected their space, they likely would have seen the misplaced can of spray paint.

It's going to take time to spread the word about ORM throughout the fleet, but we're on our way. From Jan. 14 through May 31, we have trained 72 commands, including 58 ships and 14 groups and squadrons. The overwhelming response has been positive, as evidenced by these comments:

USS *Anchorage* (LSD 36)—
"It was a wake-up call. The scenarios provided real-life situations, on duty and off, which made me think twice."

ComPhibRon Five Staff—
"The group discussion was thought-provoking and provided insight into things we take for granted. It was eye-opening and allowed us to see how others view hazards associated with tasks."

USS *Mahan* (DDG 72)—
"The five-step process provides a guide for doing everyday tasks, both at work and at home."

USS *Wasp* (LHD 1)—
"The format of the training engaged the group in discussion, enabling all participants to present their views of possible hazards. Using previous mishaps shows that common sense is not so common."

Operational risk management is **not** a program. It's also **not** something to be inspected, unless you consider a reduction in wasted deaths, injuries and mishap dollars as a means of inspection.

We look forward to coming to your area soon. Scheduled visits include Bremerton and Everett, Wash.; Ingleside, Texas; and Pearl Harbor. We'll also keep making the rounds of ships in the Norfolk area.

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